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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/631,114	07/30/2003	Andrew Richard Bridge	2153-1-3	7756
996	7590	06/01/2004	EXAMINER	
GRAYBEAL, JACKSON, HALEY LLP 155 - 108TH AVENUE NE SUITE 350 BELLEVUE, WA 98004-5901			AVILA, STEPHEN P	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3617	

DATE MAILED: 06/01/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/631,114

Applicant(s)

BRIDGE ET AL.

Examiner

Stephen Avila

Art Unit

3617

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 July 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 073003.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-5, 9, 12-16, 19, 20, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Masters (cited by Applicant) in view of Mussen. Masters discloses the basic claimed structure and method of coupling a paddle together and positioning the section relative to each other about a paddle axis. Not disclosed by Masters is the particular coupler including a couplers with protrusions. Mussen teaches structure and method of coupling a paddle together and positioning the section relative to each other about a paddle axis for angular adjustment allowing small increments of adjustment (note page 1, column 2, lines 7-15). It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the device of Masters with a coupler including first and second components to allow turning to different angular positions as taught by Mussen for angular adjustment allowing small increments of adjustment.

3. Claims 6-8, 18, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Masters in view of Mussen as applied to claims 1, 12, and 20 above, and further in view of Cheng. Masters does not disclose a rectangular key and keyway. Cheng teaches a rectangular key 21 and keyway 15. It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the device

of Masters with rectangular keys and keyways as taught by Cheng for a coupling without the potential dangers of a suddenly collapsed joint.

4. Claims 10, 11, 17 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Masters in view of Mussen as applied to claims 9, 16, and 20 above, and further in view of Hart. Not disclosed by Masters is a pin with a hook to releasably lock a lip. Hart teaches a releasable locking pin 28 with a hook 32 which locks a lip 85 (note Figure 4, for example). It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the device of Masters with releasable locking pin with a hook to lock a lip as taught by Hart to prohibit axial displacement.

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Callahan shows a locking hub. Johnson, Jr. shows a coupling. Stokes teaches a coupling.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stephen Avila whose telephone number is 703-308-2578. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Thursday from 8 AM to 4 PM (EST).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Samuel J. Morano can be reached on 703-308-0230. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Stephen Avila
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3617

Avila
5/26/04